

LAVISH SPLURGES

Whether born into great wealth or having had a spark of genius, perseverance, dedication, luck or gumption to become as filthy rich as can be, entering that elite realm of The 1% isn't for the masses. Herewith: A look at some of the playthings, trinkets and all-out investments of the ridiculously rich & famous.

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“Whatever may be said in praise of poverty, the fact remains that it is not possible to live a really complete or successful life unless one is rich,” claims Richard

Wattles in his book *The Science of Getting Rich*. “No man can rise to his greatest possible height in talent or soul development unless he has plenty of money.” Whether one’s wealth is considered old or new money, uber-rich folks are in a class all their own. And with that privilege comes the ability to access what mere mortals exasperatedly dream of as they count down the minutes to Friday’s happy hour.

The wealthy can indulge their hearts’ desires and when that’s not enough, they can delve head-first into frivolity by quelling the whims of their eccentric appetites. Connie Costa, MA Life Coach, Writer & Motivational Speaker believes that there is a huge difference between buying extravagant gifts because you truly love the actual item or because you are trying to fill a void. “I’ve noticed that many people are buying crazy-expensive gifts because they’re desperately trying to be happy and they think that purchasing these things will be enough – but it won’t, it never is. They just move from one shiny object to the next.”



In the late 20s, William Randolph Hearst could afford all the shiny objects he could procure. The publishing powerhouse and most powerful man of his time was known for his lavish parties in both of his California estates: *Heart Castle* and *San Simeon*. While the country teeter-tottered on the brink of the Great Depression, Hearst's party guests Charlie Chaplin, Joan Crawford, Errol Flynn, Clark Gables and many other Hollywood dignitaries were knee-deep in caviar and champagne served to them by monkeys dressed as waiters.

As for present day, so the saying goes: When you're up, there's no place to go but down...way down...as in deep-sea kind of down. Billionaire film director James Cameron can now claim he's one of only 4 in the world who've visited the

deepest part of Neptune's realm. He helped design his single-person submarine to venture 7 miles into the bottom of the ocean. Being the "*king of the world*" just wasn't enough: His passion for all things *Titanic* has him out to conquer the big blue anyway he can.

And when it comes to passions, Etnies Founder & World Champion Skateboarder Pierre Andre Senizergues puts new meaning into *taking your work home with you*, commissioning the first skate house. Every surface of the cylinder-shaped home in Malibu is skater-friendly and ready to use. And while

Regardless of where a person's wealth comes from, one thing's certain: Once you have it, it's time to flaunt it.



QUIRKY INVESTMENTS

If your thirst for the extravagant is never quenched, here are some flamboyant gadgets you might want to consider purchasing at some point.



Crocodile Umbrella

Heidi Klum's ex, mogul Favio Briatore, is the brains behind Billionaire Couture's \$50,000 top-grade, water-resistant crocodile skin umbrella. BillionaireCouture.com.



Golden Staples

Oooms gives brand new meaning to ransacking the office supplies with their gold-plated staples for the measly price of \$175. Yes, this is meant as sarcasm; Oooms.nl.



Tiffany Tennis

Made of sterling silver, this ball can is for the avid tennis aficionado. It holds 4 balls, and yes, it comes in the famed blue box for a cool \$1,500; Tiffany.com.



Diamond Cuts

Nesmuk allows you to go after your slice of life in grand style with this sterling silver blade adorned with 8 diamonds for the modest price of \$39,600; Nesmuk.de.



Crystal Vacuum

What goes vroom and is also adorned with 3,730 Swarovski crystals and costs \$18,993? Why yes, the world's most posh vacuum by Electrolux Poland; Electrolux.pl.



Leather Keyboard

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome? Never, with this \$603 plush leather keyboard from Gokukawa with monogrammed keys, although the price tag may affect your blood pressure; WooHome.com.



\$1 Million Catch

Ready your gone fishing sign! This platinum, diamond & ruby fishing lure from MacDaddy has a whopping \$1 million price tag. Hope the fish bite; TackleFour.com.



on the topic of huge real estate investments, imagine how annoying it would be to have to run to an ATM whenever your cash is running low and you've got more money in the bank than you know what to do with. Well, this isn't the case for NBA star DeShawn Stevenson. This guy can access his money on the spot from the ATM machine he installed in his kitchen. Another who can't stand being away from his kingdom, literally, is Saudi Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal, missing his Riyadh palace so much when he travels that he spent \$500 million on an opulent personalized "Flying Palace." With a fitness area, master bedrooms and spacious offices, the prince no longer suffers from the homesick blues in his Airbus A380.

And when only a *throne* fit for a king will do, Hang Fung Gold Technology in Japan has something for you if you're Daddy Warbucks. Perfect for even a modern-day Marie Antoinette, the solid 24 kt. gold toilet costs but a mere \$37 million, because let's be honest here, there's truly nothing like sitting down on a gold pimped-out loo when nature calls.

But if preparing for doomsday in a deluxe condo is more your cup-of-tea, grab Toto and head to the Kansas prairie where an Apocalyptic Missile Shaft Condo will run you about \$2 million. Getting claustrophobic nestled underground? It's off to Scotland where you'll find the most outrageous treehouse. Measuring 6,000 feet and suspended 56 feet above ground, this luxurious foliage wonderland consists of sustainable wood that looks like it belongs in *Hansel & Gretel* and has a going price of \$7 million.

When one has extreme wealth at their fingertips, it's easy to splurge on just about anything...especially things that offer plenty of bragging rights.

When cabin fever hits, and money is no object, you're ready to paint the town blazing-red. Make sure to do it with the KissKiss Gold & Diamond Lipstick. The encasing of the scarlet-hued lipstick is made of solid 18 kt. gold and 2.2 kt. diamond embellishments. Although this indulgence will set you back \$62,000, while you're at it, why not polish of your look (pun intended) with the most expensive nail polish in the world: the Black Diamond by Azature with a pricetag of \$250,000!

Once you're looking like a billion bucks, it's time to dine on the most expensive steak money can buy, and that would be at the Old Homestead Steakhouse in New York City's Meatpacking district. Sink your teeth into a 12 oz. portion of Kobe beef for \$350. For drinks, hitch a ride with the prince in his Flying Palace to the ultra-exclusive Pangaea Lounge in Singapore for a \$26,000 glass of the Jewel of Pangaea: Vintage Krug champagne, gold-flaked infused cognac, hickory-smoked raw sugar and a 1 kt. diamond from the House Of Mouawad Jewels.

Room for dessert?! Certainly! Miami's very own Serendipity 3 has the most expensive sundae that goes by the name of Golden Opulence. Served in a Baccarat Harcourt crystal goblet and accompanied by an 18 kt. gold spoon, the dessert is 5 scoops of the richest Tahitian vanilla covered in 23 kt. edible gold leaf, drizzled with the world's most expensive Amedei Porcelleana Chocolate. It's topped with exotic Parisian candied fruits and salt-free American Golden Grand Passion Caviar. The cost? Just \$1,000...but with money to burn, who's counting? **KB**